

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Previously Presented) A method of securely supporting password change comprising:
 - detecting an occurrence of a password change operation in execution on a system having a password database that stores passwords resulting from a password change operation;
 - detecting a new password when provided;
 - storing data indicative of the new password in an independent database other than the password database for later retrieval; and
 - providing data indicative of the new password from the independent database to the password database for changing the password in the password database to the new password.
2. (Previously Presented) A method of securely supporting password change according to claim 1 wherein detecting an occurrence of a change of password operation in execution on a system comprises detecting a new password prompt.
3. (Previously Presented) A method of securely supporting password change according to claim 1 comprising:
 - prompting a user to provide authorization data, the authorization data being other than the new password; and,
 - associating the authorization data with the new password.
4. (Previously Presented) A method of securely supporting password change according to claim 1, wherein detecting the new password comprises detecting the new password at least two separate times.
5. (Previously Presented) A method of securely supporting password change comprising:
 - detecting a change password operation in execution on a system for changing an old password, the system having a password database that stores said old password;

displaying to a user a prompt for a new password, in response to detecting the change password operation in execution and other than occurring as an operation of the change password operation;

receiving the new password;

storing the new password in a database independent of the change password operation and other than the password database where the new password is stored by the change password operation; and

providing the new password from the independent database to the password database for changing the old password to the new password.

6. (Previously Presented) A method of securely supporting password change according to claim 5 wherein detecting the change password operation in execution on a system comprises detecting password change command options.

7. (Currently Amended) A method of securely supporting password change comprising:

detecting a password change operation in execution on a system having a password database that stores passwords resulting from a password change operation;

displaying to a user a prompt for authentication information in response to detecting the change password operation in execution and other than occurring as an operation of the change password operation;

receiving the authentication information;

~~when the authentication information is indicative of a known user, performing an operation to change a password of the known user to a new password in the system automatically, and;~~

storing the new password in an independent database independent of the change password operation and other than the password database where the changed password is stored by the change password operation; and

when the authentication information is indicative of a known user, providing the new password for the known user from the independent database to the password database.

8. (Previously Presented) A method of securely supporting password change according to claim 7 wherein the prompt for authentication information is a prompt for biometric information.

9. (Previously Presented) A method of securely supporting password change according to claim 8 comprising:
providing biometric information;
processing the provided biometric information to provide biometric data;
comparing the biometric data with a stored template; and
in dependence upon a comparison result retrieving a user password from a database.

10. (Previously Presented) A method of securely supporting password change according to claim 7 wherein the prompt for authentication information is a prompt for information relating to data stored in a memory of a smart card.

11. (Canceled)

12. (Previously Presented) A method of securely supporting password change according to claim 7 comprising the further step of prompting the user to select between provision of the new password and automatic generation of the new password.

13. (Canceled)

14. (Canceled)

15. (Previously Presented) A method of securely supporting password change according to claim 12 wherein the automatically generated new password is unknown to the user.

16. (Original) A method of securely supporting password change according to claim 15 wherein the automatically generated new password is an encryption key.

17. (Original) A method of securely supporting password change according to claim 16 wherein data secured with the new password is encrypted using the encryption key.

18. (Previously Presented) A method of securely supporting password change according to claim 7 comprising:
performing another operation to change another password of the known user to the new password.

19. (Previously Presented) A method of securely supporting password change according to claim 7 comprising:
determining within the password database and associated with a same user all passwords identical to the password being changed and automatically performing at least another operation to change each identical password of the known user to the new password.

20. (Previously Presented) A method of securely supporting a password change comprising:
detecting a password change operation in execution on a system having a known user authorized thereon;
automatically generating a new password in response to detecting the password change operation and other than occurring as an operation of the change password operation and storing the new password in an independent password database other than a password database where a changed password is stored; and
performing an operation to change a password to the new password in the system automatically by providing the new password from the independent password database to the password database.

21. (Original) A method of securely supporting password change according to claim 20 wherein the automatically generated new password is unknown to the user.

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22. (Original) A method of securely supporting password change according to claim 21 wherein the automatically generated new password is an encryption key.

23. (Original) A method of securely supporting password change according to claim 22 wherein data secured with the new password is encrypted using the encryption key.

24.-37. (Canceled)